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The Nebraska Bird Review

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DORIS B. GATES, Editor

EARL W. GLANDON, Assistant Editor

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1956 NESTING REPORT *

For years records have been kept during the migration periods. Today it is a rare bird, indeed, that cannot be found on a previous migration report. Christmas Bird Counts are accumulating, and these offer a good sample of the wintering birds across the State. We are sure that it is unnecessary to enumerate the value of these endeavors and to encourage their continuance.

Today our greatest need is for more information regarding the nesting population—its distribution and numbers. For the past few years the problem has been mentioned at annual meetings of the N.O.U., and in Executive Committee meetings. Last year it was decided to conduct a week-long census June 24-30 (1956), and to request as much additional information relative to nesting as could be supplied.

First, it was asked that mere presence be recorded—sight and sound records. Presence does not necessarily indicate nesting; but certainly it is a prerequisite! Song does not necessarily indicate nesting either, and it often indicates the contrary. Unmated birds often continue to sing after the nesting pairs have become quiet. Even so, a singing bird strongly suggests the probable presence of nesting pairs of its kind.

Other information requested included whether or not (1) nests were found, (2) eggs were found, (3) young were seen, or (4) young were being fed (or adults seen carrying food). These are direct or indirect

evidences of nesting. Because there was a lack of uniformity in the replies, this information is being summarized without date or numbers of times observed.

The privilege of starting something means that an entirely new system may be evolved if it seems practical. To simplify the records without reducing their value, we have divided the State into five relatively equal areas. Each area is, in itself, more or less ecologically homogeneous. The areas are shown on the accompanying map, numbered from 1 to 5.

Eighteen reports were submitted to the Editor. Sixteen counties were represented, giving a fairly good east to west sample. Reporters were as follows:

- Area 1. Mr. and Mrs. J. Mathisen, Alliance; Mrs. H. I. Jackson, Rushville; Miss Doris Gates, Chadron.
- Area 2. Mrs. Oona S. Bassett, Tryon; Mrs. Don Held, Elsmere; Mrs. E. C. Logan, Springview.
- Area 3. Mr. and Mrs. John Lueshen, Wisner; Mrs. Kate L. Armstrong, Columbus.
- Area 4. Mrs. Harry B. Allen, Cozad; Mrs. Iola Pennington, Wauneta.
- Area 5. Harold Turner, Bladen; Mrs. O. W. Ritchey and Mrs. A. M. Jones, Hastings; Miss Carrie Ludden and Kenwood School Audubon Junior Club (Mrs. Leslie Conyers), Kear-

*Compiled by M. L. and C. G. Pritchard

ney; Mrs. Kermit S. Swanson, Aurora; Mrs. H. V. Whitmus and Audubon Naturalists' Club (Mrs. G. A. Spidel), Lincoln.

State-wide records accumulated by the Nebraska Game, Forestation and Parks Commission for game species.

1956 Nesting Report: 91 species were reported nesting in Nebraska. After each species is listed the area (or areas) from which it was reported. Western Grebe (1), Pied-billed Grebe (2), Mallard (1, 2, 3), Pintail (1, 2, 3), Green-winged Teal (1, 2, 3), Blue-winged Teal (1, 2, 3), Gadwall (2, 3), Baldpate (1, 2), Shoveller (2, 3), Redhead (1, 2), Canvasback (1), Lesser Scaup (2), Red-tailed Hawk (5), Swainson's Hawk (5), Marsh Hawk (5), Sparrow Hawk (5), Greater Prairie Chicken (2, 3, 4), Sharp-tailed Grouse (1, 2, 3, 4), Bob-white (all), Pheasant (all), Coot (all), Killdeer (1, 2, 5), Long-billed Curlew (2), Upland Plover (1, 5), Avocet (1), Mourning Dove (all), Yellow-billed Cuckoo (5), Black-billed Cuckoo (3, 5), Screech Owl (3, 5), Great Horned Owl (5), Nighthawk (5), Chimney Swift (5), Yellow-shafted Flicker (1, 5), Red-shafted Flicker (3), Red-headed Woodpecker (2, 5), Hairy Woodpecker (5), Downy Woodpecker (5), Eastern Kingbird (2, 3, 5), Western Kingbird (2, 4, 5), Crested Flycatcher (5), Eastern Phoebe (3, 5), Say's Phoebe (5), Horned Lark (1, 2, 5), Bank Swallow (5), Rough-winged Swallow (4), Barn Swallow (1, 2, 3, 5), Cliff Swallow (1, 3), Purple Martin (5), Blue Jay (2, 3, 5), Magpie (1, 4, 5), Crow (5), Chickadee (5), White-breasted Nuthatch (1), House Wren (1, 3, 4, 5), Mockingbird (1, 5), Catbird (3, 5),

Brown Thrasher (1, 2, 3, 5), Robin (1, 2, 3, 5), Wood Thrush (5), Eastern Bluebird (3), Loggerhead Shrike (1, 2, 3, 5), Starling (5), Bell's Vireo (5), Red-eyed Vireo (5), Warbling Vireo (5), Worm-eating Warbler (5), Yellow Warbler (5), Myrtle Warbler (5), Yellow-throat (3), English Sparrow (1, 2, 3, 5), Eastern Meadowlark (3, 5), Western Meadowlark (2, 3, 5), Red-wing (1, 2, 3, 5), Orchard Oriole (4, 5), Baltimore Oriole (2, 3, 5), Bronzed Grackle (1, 2, 3, 5), Cowbird (1, 5), Cardinal (3, 5), Rose-breasted Grosbeak (5), Black-headed Grosbeak (5), Blue Grosbeak (1, 2, 3, 5), Dickcissel (3, 4, 5), Evening Grosbeak (5), Goldfinch (2, 5), Lark Bunting (1, 5), Grasshopper Sparrow (3, 5), Vesper Sparrow (2, 5), Lark Sparrow (1, 2, 3, 4), Chipping Sparrow (1, 2, 5), Field Sparrow (3, 5).

The above species were often reported present in areas other than those in which they were reported nesting. Forty-seven additional species were reported in one or more areas. Because this is the first nesting report and because knowledge of the presence of these species may alert observers next year, a list of the species is as follows: Horned Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron, American Bittern, American Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Cooper's Hawk, Prairie Falcon, Willet, Wilson's Phalarope, Ring-billed Gull, Interior Least Tern, Black Tern, Barn Owl, Western Burrowing Owl, Nuttall's Poor-will, White-throated Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Kingfisher, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Western Wood Pewee, Violet-green Swallow, Tree Swallow, Tufted Titmouse, Mountain Bluebird, Northwestern Shrike, Black and

White Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Audubon's Warbler, Ovenbird, Chat, American Redstart, Bobolink, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Bullock's Oriole, Brewer's Blackbird, Western Tanager, Indigo Bunting, Lazuli Bunting, House Finch, Pine Siskin, Rufous-sided Towhee, Savannah Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, and Song Sparrow.

This is a good beginning, but it is only a beginning. We would like to suggest the continuation of this worthwhile activity. Although a concentrated week-long census is valuable, it would be even better if reporters kept records throughout the spring and summer. The following form seems to be a very useable one:

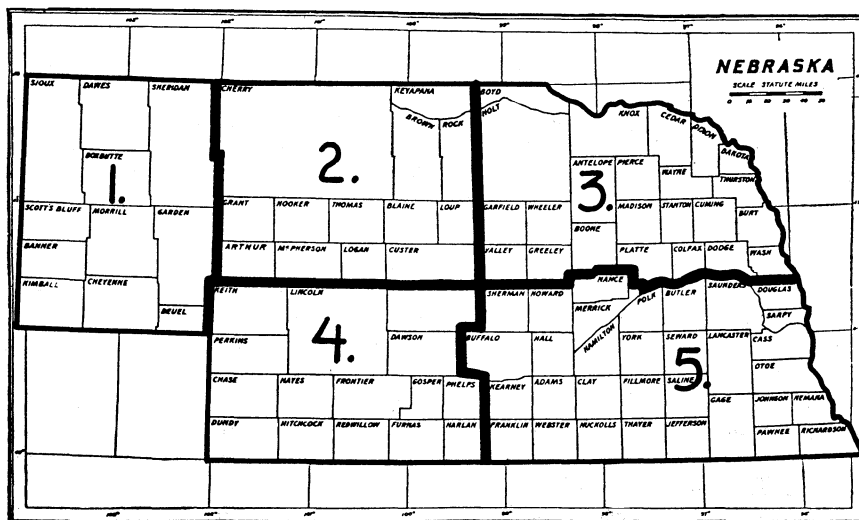
column 1. date (s)

column 2. name of bird (check list order)

column 3. evidence of nesting (carrying nest materials, nest *in use*, young, adults carrying food)

column 4. remarks

Everyone submitting a report is contributing to field ornithology in Nebraska. Whether your interests extend throughout a county (or counties) or are limited to your own backyard, you can help by sending your observations to the Editor. Don't forget to enlist the aid of the young folks you may know—Scouts, 4-H clubs, Audubon Junior Clubs, or the boy or girl down the street. Their eyes are sharp and their legs are nimble!





Attending the Mid-Winter Convention are: Ralph Velich, Mrs. C. G. Pritchard, C. G. Pritchard, L. O. Horsky, and Wm. Ferguson. Photo by Mrs. L. Iola Pennington.

REPORT OF THE MID-WINTER CONVENTION

A Mid-Winter Convention was held in the Y.M.C.A. in Omaha January 12, 1957, with about 50 persons in attendance. Luncheon was served at 12:00 Noon and a paper session followed. Charles Mohr of the Audubon Society showed pictures taken by Karl Maslowski. He showed them during the afternoon for those who were unable to attend the evening program. An informal dinner was held at a nearby cafe.

The program was as follows: "Winter Bird Populations," by Wm. F. Rapp, Jr.; "Dove Banding," by Burton Nelson; "Effects of Modern Science on Homing Instincts of Pigeons," by Mrs. John Lueshen; "Duck Banding in Canada," by W. G.

McClure; "Bird Observations Around Kearney at Four Miles Per Hour," by John C. W. Bliese; "Bird Behavior," by Doris Gates; and "A Preliminary Report on Nesting in Nebraska," by C. G. Pritchard.

Mrs. John Lueshen was in charge of making arrangements for the program and meeting places. L. O. Horsky gave considerable assistance. John Bliese was in charge of the meeting.

Those who attended felt the meeting was quite successful and expressed a desire to continue such meetings in future years. Some suggested that local meetings might be held in other areas of the state.

DR. JOHN TODD ZIMMER

Biographical Background

Dr. John Todd Zimmer, Chairman of the Department of Birds of The American Museum of Natural History, was born in Bridgeport, Ohio on February 28, 1889. He received his B.S. in 1910 and his M.A. in 1911 from the University of Nebraska from which he also received an honorary D.Sc. in 1943.

Dr. Zimmer joined The American Museum of Natural History in 1930 as Associate Curator in the Department of Birds, later becoming Acting Curator and Curator in 1942. He was appointed Chairman of his department in 1954, succeeding Dr. Robert Cushman Murphy. He was an authority on the systematic and distributional ornithology of the United States and South America.

Before joining the staff of the Museum, Dr. Zimmer was an assistant curator at the Field Museum, now known as the Chicago Natural History Museum, from 1922 to 1930. Between the years 1917 and 1921, he was an agricultural expert with the Papuan Department of Agriculture in New Guinea. He also served as an entomologist with the Philippine Bureau of Agriculture from 1913 to 1916 and field expert in entomology for the Nebraska Experimental Station between 1911 and 1913.

Dr. Zimmer has been a member of scientific expeditions to many parts

of the world including the Marshall Field Peruvian Expedition of 1922-1923 and the Conover-Everard African Expedition of 1926-1927. He is a former editor of the "AUK," the publication of the American Ornithologists Union and a recipient of that organization's 1952 Brewster Medal. He was a member of the Society for the Study of Evolution, the Society for Systematic Zoology, the Biological Society of Washington and a fellow of the New York Zoological Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, as well as Sigma Chi, the University Club of White Plains, the Explorers' Club and John Burrough Memorial Award Committee.

Dr. Zimmer's scientific writings include several volumes on Peruvian birds and numerous papers on other South and North American birds. He has also compiled a two-volume catalog of the Ayer Ornithological Library in Chicago.

LETTERS OF SPECIAL NOTE

—"Birding here in the 'cruel' desert has proved very interesting. In a month I have listed the following: (mostly in my back yard at one little mesquite bush, with water, food and some shade available) Turkey Vulture, Mourning Dove, Inca Dove, Road-runner (when he appears the Cactus Wren swears with all his might), Great Horned Owl, Long-eared Owl (last seen 34 years ago in Lincoln), Texas Nighthawk, Gilded Flicker, Gila Woodpecker, White-

A Release from the American Museum of Natural History dated December 21, 1955. Dr Zimmer died January 6, 1957.

necked Raven, Cactus Wren, Say's Phoebe, Western Mockingbird, Bendire's Thrasher, Yellow Warbler, Pileolated Warbler, Brewer's Blackbird, Verdin, Green-tailed Towhee, Canyon Towhee, Pyrrhuloxia, Cardinal, House Finch, Western Lark Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Western Vesper Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Gambel's Sparrow, Brewer's Sparrow (last seen in Western Nebraska in 1916), Gambel's Quail, and Red-shafted Flicker.

"The Bendire's Thrasher is the most conspicuous bird in my yard. As the day progresses and the temperature reaches 100° on the way up, then the Thrasher comes and sings softly in the little mesquite bush, 'yards of it' sometimes by the hour. It must be that he is one of those birds that the zoologists are to meet in the next world!" Signed Ralph (R. W.) Dawson, 14 Desert Lane (Palm Springs), Route 2, Mesa, Arizona.

"I received your letter while in Washington . . . I wanted to visit my son at Chapel Hill, N. C., whom I had not seen for four years . . . !

stopped off in Pittsburgh and Chicago to see old friends, also in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to meet a colleague in Mallophaga whom I had never seen, but with whom I had corresponded for a long time, Col. K. C. Emerson.

"I have a sister and son here, the latter an eye surgeon on the staff of the Medical School of the Uni. of Calif., also in private practice with another eye specialist." Signed M. A. Carriker, Jr., Apartado No. 82, Popayan, Colombia, S. A.

"As you may have heard, Dr. John T. Zimmer, since 1930 a member of the Department of Birds at this Museum, died on January 6. While an undergraduate at the University of Nebraska he was an active student of birds of your state, and your society will be pleased to know, I am sure, that he had asked us to send his collection of the birds of Nebraska made at that time to the University of Nebraska State Museum at Lincoln." Signed Dean Amadon, American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street, New York 24, N.Y.

COWBIRD EGGS IN NESTS OF BELL'S VIREOS

On May 7 (1956) we heard a Bell's Vireo singing in our yard for the first time. On May 22 we found the first nest just being completed in a Persian Lilac hedge. On the day following the discovery of the nest we found a Cowbird's egg in it and we removed it. The next day we found the first Vireo's egg. On the third day we found two Vireo's eggs and one Cowbird's egg which we

removed. By May 27 there were four Vireo eggs. Two weeks later (June 10) the first two young were hatched. When we looked in the nest a week later we found three young, all dead, and one egg that had not hatched. The nest was full of ants but we are inclined to doubt that the ants killed the young birds.

A second Bell's Vireo nest was located in a Tartarian Honeysuckle

hedge about 75 feet from the first nest. This one also had a Cowbird's egg before the Vireo laid the first egg, and another Cowbird's egg was laid on the day the first Vireo egg was in the nest. Both Cowbird's eggs were removed. A small hole appeared in the Vireo egg. It might have been made by the Cowbird either by its bill or claw. The nest was abandoned.

This pair of Vireos constructed a second nest about 50 feet from the nest of the first pair, in a Korean Lilac hedge. As in the other nests, the first egg laid was a Cowbird's, which I removed. The first Vireo egg was laid June 9. By June 13 there were four eggs. The young began hatching June 24 and all four eggs hatched. One young disappeared, but the other three left the nest July 6.

Another Bell's Vireo nest was built in the same hedge as the first nest and we assume it was the same pair of Vireos. A Cowbird's egg was in the nest after the first two Vireo eggs had been laid. This I removed

as I had all the other Cowbird's eggs. The first Vireo egg was laid June 21 and the fourth egg, June 25. The first young hatched July 8.*

The Cowbirds laid one egg in each of two nests and two eggs in each of two other nests. The presence of the Cowbirds would have been unknown to us if we had not found the eggs. (Two years ago we found two Cowbird's eggs in a Cardinal's nest in a mock orange bush near our kitchen window.)

Without our interference the Vireos would only have raised Cowbirds. Possibly it is deemed illegal to remove Cowbird's eggs from other birds' nests, but John Burroughs did it and Mrs. Horsky and I believe that a majority of N. O. U. members would have done the same.

It seems to take the Vireo's eggs about 15 days to hatch and about 13 days for the young to leave the nest after they are hatched.

—L. O. Horsky, Omaha

*Four were successfully fledged.

NOTES

KEITH COUNTY.—On June 18 (1955) a nest of the Lark Bunting was found in the pasture lands north of Brule. The nest was among Prickly Pear Cactus foliage and contained six eggs. The male was flushed from the nest. Two days later the male was seen feeding two young.

On the same date a Grasshopper Sparrow nest was discovered containing four eggs. This sparrow could be classed as a regular nester. Several young are to be seen each year. The young have been caught

on different occasions.

On May 28, 1956, a new bird voice was heard in the trees in Brule. After a few minutes the singer came into sight where we, Clarence Huntley and I, were able to identify him as a Blue-headed Vireo. After much checking and double-checking, I am inclined to believe the bird was a Plumbeous Vireo according to Peterson's Western Guide and the Nebraska Checklist, page 29.

A Snow Bunting was observed with a large flock of Lapland Longspurs north of the Elmer Cole Ranch home February 5, 1956. Another one was sighted in Eagle Canyon.—*Clarence W. Huntley for Harold R. Benckeser, Brule*

WINTER REPORT FROM WEBSTER COUNTY.—This past winter (dated February 25, 1957) has been quite drab, at least from this birder's observations. I believe it has been the most Crow-less yet. Magpies are now ever-present here but they have favorite places and it is sometimes necessary to know where to look for them. This is likewise true of some of the other permanent winter species such as Chickadees. It often pays to search for Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers in wooded areas. (Those who have their birds trained to come to feeders in the yard are likely rewarded for their efforts.)

Since the beginning of the year I have found Cardinals present along the Little Blue near Bladen, but no Robins have appeared at this writing, and Redwings seemed absent until February 6. Pine Siskins and Goldfinches were not seen until February 16 and 17 respectively. I did, however, have a Rusty Blackbird from January 8 to about the 15th and again from about February 10 to 17. Chestnut-collared Longspurs were more common with me this season than usual. A flock estimated at 150-200 was seen January 23. Lapland Longspurs and Horned Larks were fairly numerous.

Western Meadowlarks were always present but quite scarce for a few weeks. Starlings also were seen in limited numbers about the farmstead. The Horned Owl is common and can be heard calling almost every night

now. Juncos and Tree Sparrows have been with me. Also, the White-crowned Sparrow was here from December 17 to 20 inclusively. The highlight of my season's bird-watching pleasure was the presence of a Northern Shrike from December 16 to February 5. But what is so thrilling as a bunch of Bob-whites? At last count, I had at least 15 left out of 24 (two broods combined).

—*Harold Turner, Bladen*

CHERRY COUNTY.—Shortly before Christmas, 1955, our first flock of Redpolls appeared. They furnished lots of entertainment during the long winter, working busily on the sumac and maples, and posing beautifully on the green cedar tips. We had always thought tumbleweeds unsightly things but from now on we will prize them as a favorite source of food for the tiny Redpolls.

Last winter brought other visitors to our refuge who were not so welcome. One morning in the new-fallen snow we found the prints of beating wing tips and followed them across the lawn to a partially eaten rabbit. We knew that Great Horned Owls had invaded our cedars. These owls are welcome and useful birds because of the great numbers of kangaroo rats; but since we established a Bobwhite covey, this is the second winter that owls have destroyed them down to a single pair.

During one February blizzard our quails were safe from both owls and sharp winds but we were saddened by their disappearance. Our Airedale dog found them under an ice-glazed drift, still in good condition, after ten days of imprisonment.

Last December 23 (1955) a Northern Shrike appeared, the first to be

observed here. It chased a Robin through the cedars, forced it to the ground and killed it by tearing off the head. The hungry shrike, flying a few feet at a time, dragged its kill to the base of a wild currant which it used as a sort of clamp to grip the body of the Robin while it tore away the feathers.

A Mourning Dove nested in the Chinese elm close to the barn in the summer of 1956. We could watch this nest from the window and three broods were hatched. The third nest was late in August and only one egg hatched. The growth of twigs and leaves throughout the summer inclosed the nest and it became a very satisfactory location. This seemed an unusual observation to us.

There were four young in a Blue Jay nest when they were attacked by a bull snake. Hearing the usual commotion we were in time to shoot the snake before any of the young were destroyed, but two were spattered with blood. The parent birds tossed these two young to the ground and one was killed. The smaller one survived the fall. We placed it in the nest but later found it on the ground again.

Early one morning last May a Least Bittern alighted on our lawn a few feet from the house. It stood in the open for some time but finally walked near a clump of lilacs. We walked within four feet of it but it made no movement. Late in the evening when we attempted to pick it up, it flew away.—*Mrs. Donald Held, Elsmere*

SAUNDERS COUNTY.—April 29, 1956, Peter C. Petersen, Jr., and I saw a flock of 78 Eared Grebes in one group on Memphis Lake. July 22, 1956, Dale Birkenholz and I first heard and then saw a male Blue

Grosbeak near Memphis Lake. We also heard another male singing in the same locality. About five miles east of Ceresco we observed a pair of Mockingbirds carrying food but did not locate their nest. At a small pond on the Ceresco Flats, three miles east of Ceresco, we saw a Least Tern. Two Swainson's Hawks were circling overhead.—*Dennis L. Carter, Ames, Iowa*

GAGE COUNTY.—August 13, 1956, we saw at least 3000 swallows in South Beatrice. They were mostly on telephone wires, but a few were in nearby trees and a few were flying. They sat quite still while I drove by several times. They were mostly Tree Swallows (I could see the white breasts) and some were darker, probably Martins. There were others with darker throats, probably Rough-winged Swallows.

—*Mary Sturmer, Beatrice*

HALL COUNTY.—(From a letter dated June 28, 1956.) Our Brown Thrashers (assuming it is the same pair) came back and built in the same climbing rose, same spot. They had four eggs but I heard them scolding one morning and later discovered all the eggs broken but one. The birds deserted it and the yard, but there is still a pair around.

The Catbird has a nest out in the wild plum bushes. There were four beautiful eggs and now there are three little birds.

There are at least two pairs of Baltimore Orioles and two pairs or more of Orchard Orioles. I hear them singing and see them in the yard. I supplied the orioles with white yarn and string after watching them try to pull off the strings holding up the climbing rose. Even then I had quite a time locating

nests as they flew around the side of the house and got away so fast. Then a Western Kingbird gathered up the strings while the Orioles tugged at the climbing rose string.

The Eastern Kingbirds are thick. There must be six pairs or more around, and their nests aren't very far apart.

A Warbling Vireo sat on its nest and sang until I located it near the hen house, about 12 feet high. I think they have hatched as the birds are not on the nest constantly now. I tried to see in it with a mirror on a hoe but the nest is under some leafy twigs.

The Redwing in the lilac bush has her young out of the nest. There are about three pairs around. And four or five pairs of Bronzed Grackles.

The swallow in the cowbarn has a nest crowded with six almost ready to fly. The other three nests are not full enough to see the young as yet. I saw a Robin carrying worms so know it has a nest. There are three or four pairs of Mourning Doves. I've heard a Yellow Warbler singing but no nest has been located.

I've heard the flicker and seen it, and the Red-headed Woodpecker so am sure they are nesting. And of course, there are Dickcissels on every telephone wire—almost between every pair of poles. I saw old and young Killdeer in the barnlot.

At a neighbor's we found a Yellow Warbler's nest in a lilac bush, and we heard a Great Horned Owl.—*Margaret Morton, Doniphan*

THOMAS COUNTY.—June 11, 1956, at 8:00 P.M. I heard the call of the Nuttall's Poor-will. I again heard the call at about 9:00 P.M. the same evening and again the mornings of the 15th and 16th about

4:30. This is the first report of the bird in this part of the state.

—*Carl Smith, Halsey*

HAMILTON COUNTY.—April 27 as I was birding in the small park next to our home a large gray hawk flew from the top of a spruce. It was in pursuit of a Mourning Dove and flew so quickly that I was not sure of its identity. The next day I was again in the park and a hawk flew from the ground under a spruce. The long banded tail and the white stripe above the eye marked it as a Goshawk. I found a dead robin under the spruce. The next day the hawk was still in the park and the small birds seemed to be absent. The following day two men worked in the park most of the day and when I walked through I saw no sign of the hawk.

May 16 (1956), while birding in the park with three neighbor children I sighted a small bird in one of the bushes. Although it was a small bird we had approached it closely enough to see it plainly even without a binocular. The breast was plain and a dirty white. The back was olive-brown. The crown was a warm brown and there was a light line above the eye. Both the wings and the beak were longish. We stood quite still and watched it as it fed on the bush. I am certain that it was a Swainson's Warbler.

—*Mrs. Kermit S. Swanson, Aurora*

BOX BUTTE COUNTY.—We have found western Nebraska to be an Ornithologist's paradise. (Previously we were southeastern Michigan "bird watchers.") The variety and abundance of species was amazing to us during the spring migrations, many of which we had been hoping to see for a long time. On May 2,

5, 6, and 14 (1956) we saw 50 or more species in a single day. The high was on May 14 when we saw 63 species. (The names of these birds appear in the Migration and Occurrence Report, October Number of the *Review*.)

On May 3 at approximately 10:45 P.M. (and probably earlier and later) the sky over Alliance was literally alive with bird voices—some close and some far. The stars were not shining and no birds could be observed. It appeared that a large number of birds were passing overhead—a mass migration. The next morning a Lincoln's Sparrow was found dead on the sidewalk below a living room picture window. Gambel's Sparrows, Spotted Towhees, Myrtle Warblers, and Lark Sparrows were also observed in the City Park and adjacent backyards. Gambel's Sparrows were the most numerous of the migrants.

The City Park attracts a number of birds during migration, probably due to the trees, shrubs and two ponds. Gambel's Sparrows arrived on April 29 and the last individual was seen May 19, 1956. They were especially numerous during the earlier portion of this period when they were frequently seen and heard. During the latter part they were less frequently heard and near the end of the period they were only seen, not heard.

Myrtle Warblers were noted in the city on April 27 and the last one was seen May 15. They were much more numerous than Audubon's Warblers. The Yellow-throat was present from May 11 through May 22. Both males and females were seen, but males outnumbered the females. They preferred the low (about four feet) bushes adjacent to a small pond.

In this area a Northern Waterthrush was present from May 11 to 23.

One or more Olive-backed Thrushes were noted from May 11 through May 23 in or near bushes and trees. They were always silent. A Spotted Sandpiper was seen at the edge of the duck pond in the mud on May 13 and again on May 25. A single male Red Crossbill was observed May 22 feeding on dandelion seeds in the grassy lawn of the park and on May 23 and 25 a pair was seen. They kept close together. The male followed the female whenever she flew off a little. They were probably attracted by the abundance of dandelion seeds.

On April 14 an unusual goose was seen on a pasture pond with several thousand Snow Geese and one or more Blue Geese. Due to the great distance an accurate description was almost impossible, but it appeared as follows: Its belly and throat appeared to be black, the neck and upper back were rusty, while the middle and lower back were white. In flight black wing-tips similar to those possessed by a Snow Goose were noted. At that time we felt it was an individual splashed with mud, but on April 21 it was again observed in the same condition, hence this theory was discounted. We suspect this goose was a hybrid.—*John and Ann Mathisen, Alliance*

D A W S O N COUNTY.—Starlings have had two very noisy broods. One was early in the summer and the other about July 1. Several females had four big young following them about the yard. Our Starlings are multiplying very fast and many birds formerly abundant are rare or miss-

ing. I'm blaming the flocks of Starlings.

As for Harris Sparrows, I saw them first in the yard January 20. They seemed to be passing a stage of moulting because the black was patchy, not continuous about the head and throat. But it gradually spread until in the spring they had full deep color. Earlier some had light colored throats.

February 16 there was a smaller sparrow on the table, whose stripes on the crown were brown and gray, but later these cleared into black and white strips for the White-crowned Sparrow. They fed at the table practically every day, often five or six at a time, until the evening of May 5 when the yard and hedge seemed full of very excited birds. They fed often and we guessed they were making ready for a night flight. May 6 our yard and hedge were bare of birds and we have not seen a Harris Sparrow since. A few White-crowned Sparrows were around for several days, then they were gone, too.—

—*Hallie J. Allen, Cozad*

KEITH COUNTY.—The Townsend's Solitaire has been quite common in Brule this winter.

—*Clarence W. Huntley, Brule*

DOUGLAS COUNTY.—July 1, 1956, we visited the nesting colony of Great Blue Herons on Dr. Harold Gifford's farm adjoining the Fontenelle Forest. In spite of some shooting of the Herons, we found a rather large number still nesting.

A female albino Robin was reported in Omaha during the summer of 1956. Her only mark was a small red spot on the breast. Her mate was a normally colored Robin. They nearly completed a nest but didn't finish it apparently because of cats. She was injured and Mr. Smolinski

caught her and cared for her until she was able to fly. She and the male disappeared from the neighborhood. Mrs. S. A. Perkins checked on an albino Robin which had been reported the summer before and it appeared this was the same Robin returned the second year.

—*L. O. Horsky, Omaha*

I want to report that Miss Edith Neal and her sister at Ft. Calhoun are very sure they saw a Painted Bunting at the bird bath in their yard. It stayed around long enough for them to get their bird books and identify it. The bird was there about the middle of June. The Misses Neals have been observing birds for some time so I think it quite probable they are correct.—*Mary A. Towne, Omaha*

NUCKOLLS COUNTY.—The Dickcissels are everywhere around here. Everywhere you drive is full of Dickcissels (June 22, 1956).

—*Mrs. Earle Lionberger, Superior*

CUMING COUNTY.—(June 15, 1956) The Sioux City Bird Club was here for the day, and they saw a White-winged Scoter in Cuming County. The next morning we went back to look for it but it was gone.

—*Mrs. John Lueshen, Wisner*

LINCOLN COUNTY.—We saw Chimney Swifts first on May 9, 1956—four of them—and I saw them every time I was in town (North Platte) all summer. The last time I saw them was August 3, and I counted 16. Mr. (Wilson) Tout has only one record in his book and that is of a dead one found in his chimney in 1908. I'm sure if they had been here other summers I would have seen them because they are always one of the first birds that I am aware of when we go east.—*Mrs. Glenn Viehmeyer, North Platte*

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1956

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Jan. 1, 1956 Balance in general fund | \$646.01 | \$658.01 |
| Life membership fund | 12.00 | |

Receipts

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| Active memberships, 102 | \$307.00 |
| Sustaining members, 15 | 75.00 |
| Life member 1 | 50.00 |
| <i>Review</i> subscriptions 33 | 109.00 |
| Sale of <i>Reviews</i> | 16.74 |
| Sale of checklists | 3.73 |
| Interest on bonds | 5.00 |
| Surplus from state meeting | 49.75 |
| Contribution | 1.00 |

| | | |
|--|--------|---------|
| | 617.22 | 1275.23 |
|--|--------|---------|

Expenditures

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------|
| Graham Printing Service | |
| <i>Bird Review</i> , Jan. '56 | 118.28 |
| <i>Bird Review</i> , Apr. '56 | 107.98 |
| <i>Bird Review</i> , July '56 | 156.60 |
| <i>Bird Review</i> , Oct. '56 | 204.18 |
| Addressing NOU News | 3.08 |

| | |
|--|--------|
| | 590.12 |
|--|--------|

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|------------------------------|-------|
| Doris Gates, editor | |
| Paper, postage, phone | |
| Gas on NOU business | 57.72 |
| Mrs. John Lueshen, secretary | |
| Postage | 8.42 |
| Phone | 1.49 |
| Programs for annual meeting | 21.80 |
| Gas to meetings | 8.00 |

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|--|-------|
| | 39.71 |
|--|-------|

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|---------------------------------|-------|
| Wm. F. Rapp, outgoing pres. | |
| Phone calls and stamps | 24.10 |
| W. E. Eigsti | |
| Publicity for annual meeting | 10.23 |
| Mrs. C. G. Pritchard, custodian | |
| Library fund | 21.76 |
| Mrs. O. W. Ritchey | |
| Stamps | 6.50 |
| Treasurer's bond | 5.00 |

| | |
|--|-------|
| | 11.50 |
|--|-------|

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|---|------|--------|---------|
| Dave Jamieson, stationery | | 33.05 | |
| Quiz Engraving Company, cuts | 2.74 | | |
| | 1.40 | | |
| | 4.50 | | |
| | .32 | | |
| | | 8.96 | |
| <hr/> | | | |
| Dr. Raymond Hall, speaker at annual meeting | | 50.00 | |
| Refunds on dues | | 1.50 | |
| Bank service charge | | .30 | |
| Honorary membership certificate | | 3.85 | |
| | | 852.80 | |
| <hr/> | | | |
| January 1, 1957 Balance on hand | | 422.43 | 1275.28 |
| <i>Investments</i> | | | |
| Two G Bonds, maturity value \$200, cost \$100 each | | | |
| Three J Bonds, maturity value \$100, cost \$72 each | | | |
| Mrs. O. W. Ritchey | | | |
| Treasurer | | | |

BRIEF SUMMARY OF 1956 HIKES

Carl H. Swanson of Omaha sent a table summarizing his activities in 1956. The Editor took the liberty to reduce it to the following:

During the months from March to December inclusively Mr. Swanson took 36 hikes making an average of 3.6 hikes per month. His total mileage was 350 with an average of 9.72 miles per hike. The maximum number of miles was 13, and the minimum was six. Each hike required an average of 4.18 hours the extremes being two and a half and nine and the total being 150.75 hours. He saw an average of 28.08 species with the

highest number (50) being recorded June 13-14 and the lowest (12) being recorded March 16. Species he included are Goldfinch, many sparrows (Harris's, Field, White-throated, White-crowned, Fox, and Song), Carolina Wrens, one White-eyed Vireo, Bluebirds, Titmice, Robins, Cardinals, Red-winged Blackbirds, Towhees, Catbirds, Bohemian Waxwings, Juncos; and he saw a heronry of the Blue Heron with about 40 nests. He heard the Barred Owl.

Truly, Mr. Swanson must enjoy the out-of-doors!

SCOTTSBLUFF IS THE PLACE; MAY 18-19, 1957, ARE THE DATES;
N. O. U. CONVENTION IS THE EVENT.

Nebraska Ornithologists' Union
325 So. 11th Street
Lincoln, Nebraska

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE SPIRIT OF THE WILD.
William J. Long. Double & Company,
Inc., Garden City, New York, 1956:
256 pp. \$4.00.

Dr. Long's daughter found a collection of short articles among his belongings after his death and they have been collected into this book. He was a philosopher and accurate observer of animals in their own surroundings and records them with skill and charm. He not only tells about the Musquash, Fox and Deer but challenges his readers to reason out the why of their behavior. Any naturalist will enjoy THE SPIRIT

OF THE WILD.—DG

A MANUAL FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE BIRDS OF MINNESOTA AND NEIGHBORING STATES. Thomas S. Roberts. The University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1955: 293 pp. \$3.50.

This manual has a key with descriptions of 335 species plus 33 subspecies. There are many drawings to explain the meaning of some of the descriptions. This book would be very valuable in any reference library for bird identification and particularly for the "bird in the hand."—DG